

in a line. Household groups kept together, since they would stop from time to time to dig wild turnips. Whenever the leader saw these plants in great numbers, he would ask his assistant, the announcer of the Black Mouths, to stop the party. All would dig except the scouts, who were ahead guarding the party against surprise by the enemy or hunting for fresh meat, and the Black Mouths, who were mounted and armed to protect the party against attack. The latter watched for stragglers and helped them to join the main party. [224] [222] • [561]

The leader selected the camping place which had been agreed upon in advance, and the Black Mouths enforced the regulations that the lodges be arranged in a circle at a certain distance from each other and compelled those whose lodges were out of place to take them down and set them up in such a way that the circle was complete except for a larger entrance at the side of the leader's lodge where the horses could be brought through to be corraled within the open circle. The leader's household was at the front of the line when traveling and was the first to set up a tepee; the back end of the line which was assembled by household groups swung around in a wide circle so that the last in the line set up their tepee at the side of the leader's tepee, thus completing the circle. Ropes were tied between the tepees forming a corral into which the horses were driven for the night. 224 561 361

The leader's tepee was used as a meeting place for the people assisting him in planning the hunt. They selected the scouts each day and relieved others who had ridden far; when the party had reached its destination, they also selected the leader of the hunters who was changed from day to day if the work of killing animals was tedious as was often the case when the buffaloes were in small bands. The leader was responsible for the success of the entire party and was expected to call in the hunters if scouts reported an enemy encampment until it was decided whether to move to another place or make provisions for the defense of the party. The Black Mouths drove all the women and children into the camp and enforced rigid rules against leaving. 224 [561]

The men butchered the animals and brought the meat to the camp, while the women cut it into strips and dried it on scaffold. All were expected to get equal amounts, and a woman 224 462

249 fine. It was usually smoked mixed with the bark of the so-called
276 red-willow or Cornus. Henry says that the blossoms were used,
and were dried on a piece of pottery before the fire. Lewis
and Clarke and Gass both mention this tobacco and agree with
Verendrye that it was not good to those who were accustomed
to European tobacco. The Mandans themselves soon discarded
their own variety, raising only a little each year to use in cere-
monials.

- 222 Although hardly coming under agriculture, still as a related
matter, it might be well to mention the wild vegetables and
fruits which were so much used by the Indians of the region.
These were june-berries, choke-cherries, wild plums, the feve-
role, and especially the pomme blanche or Indian turnip. The
latter were something like artichokes, white, ovate, one to three
inches long, and about the size of a man's finger. They were
collected in large quantities and formed a very common food.

224 HUNTING AND FISHING:—The Mandans derived a living
from agriculture and the hunt in about equal proportions. Their
methods of hunting differed little from those of their neighbors.
Game was in abundance and many animals besides the buffalo
contributed to their sustenance. Among these were antelope,
elk, deer, bighorn, and an occasional bear, besides beaver,
rabbits, ducks and geese. Other animals were killed for their
hides alone, as wolves, foxes, ermine and panther. Eagles and
other birds of prey were hunted for their plumes.

Buffalo were hunted all the year round whenever they were
in the neighborhood of the village, for the Mandans did not go
away on long hunting trips as did most of their neighbors. The
buffalo hunt was directed by the Soldier Band. A small de-
tached body of buffalo would be surrounded by the horsemen
and then every animal killed in order to prevent the alarm-
ing of the whole herd. Any animal which did not contain an
arrow by which the slayer could be identified, belonged to who-
ever found it. The beasts were cut up, and each man's
horse was laden down with meat. Certain choice parts were
eaten immediately by the hunter, and the heart and tongue
could be demanded from anyone of a lower grade than he who
asked for them. The childless old men and women usually

cultivated by the Mandans, Manitaris, and Arikaras, attains a great height, and is suffered to grow up from the seeds, without having any care whatever bestowed upon it. It is not transplanted. When it is ripe the stalks are cut, dried, and powdered; or the leaves, with the small branches, are cut into little pieces. The taste and smell are disagreeable to an European, resembling camomile rather than tobacco. The plant is not now so much cultivated as formerly, being superseded by the more pleasant tobacco of the Whites; but the species is still preserved. It is only on solemn occasions, for instance, in negotiations for peace, that this tobacco is still smoked; the seed is, therefore, preserved in the medicine bag of the nation, that the plant may never be lost. When they mean to smoke this tobacco, a small quantity of fat is rubbed on it. [278]

The cultivation of the maize and other fields, of which each family prepares three, four, or five acres, takes place in the month of May. Rows of small furrows are made, into which the grains of maize are thrown singly, and covered with earth. Three times in the summer the plants are hoed, and the earth heaped up against them, that the moisture may have better access to them. The harvest takes place in October, when men, women, and children, each lend a helping hand. At present the women use, in their field labour, a broad iron hoe, with a crooked wooden handle, which they obtain from the merchants. Charbonneau recollected the time when they used the shoulder blade of the buffalo for this purpose. The fields are never fenced, but lie quite open and exposed.

The wild plants of the prairie are used by the Mandans, and other people of the Upper Missouri; and to those before-mentioned, I can only add the feverolles (*Faba minor equina*), a fruit resembling the bean, which is said to grow in the ground, but which I did not see; there are many other roots in the prairie, which are used for food. The gourds are eaten fresh as well as dry. The beans are seldom eaten of one kind, but many sorts are mixed together. The maize is boiled or roasted, then pounded, mixed with fat, and made up into small cakes and baked. There are, of course, many other ways of dressing it. The sweet maize has a very pleasant taste, especially when it is in what is called the milky state; it is then boiled, dried, and laid by for use.

All kinds of animals serve the Mandans for food; the bear, when it is young and fat, the wolf, the fox, in short, everything except the horse; the ermine is not eaten by many; and of birds they dislike the turkey-buzzard, and the raven, because they feed on the dead bodies deposited on the stages. They have a great aversion from serpents, but eat the turtle; the buffalo is the chief object of their chase, as it supplies them with skins, meat, tallow, marrow-bones, sinews, and many other necessities. Next to the buffalo the beaver is the most indispensable to them, since it not only furnishes them with valuable skins, but supplies them with delicate food, the fat tail, especially, being considered quite a dainty morsel by the Indians. Pemican,

LIFE AMONG THE MANDANS.

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and treasures, as it contains every thing he values most, viz : two bulls' heads, which seem to be their great Manitou and protection. They are well daubed over with earth, and particular care is taken of them. There is laid on, or rather hung up, his arms, shield, ammunition, scalps of his enemies, and every thing he most values.

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MORTAR AND PESTLE.

Next to this stage, stand the mortar and pestle, fixed firm in the ground, and the remainder of the hut from that to the door is vacant during the daytime, but occupied during the night by the horses. Then there still remains a large space in the center, around the fire, for the use of the family, which is generally swept clean once a day. $\frac{1}{4}$

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CORN STAGE.

Fronting the entrance of each porch stands a stage raised about eight feet from the ground, twenty feet in length, and ten feet in breadth, for the purpose of hanging up their corn to dry, in the fall; these stages have a tolerable good flooring, which in the fall is covered with beans to dry, and posts are erected upon them, on the tops of which are laid poles or rafters, to which the corn and sliced squashes are suspended in tresses to dry. When their harvest is over, they must have a pretty effect, but at this season of the year they are lumbered up with different kinds of drift-wood, of which they make their fires, and it gives a very ugly appearance to the villages.

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DRIFT WOOD.

This wood they collect, in the spring, when the ice breaks up, and when great quantities of this wood floats down, the natives being expert swimmers, and so very active, that there is scarcely a large tree escapes them, until they have a sufficient stock for the year. I observed lying opposite to each village, an immense pile of this wood, and some trees of an amazing size. Commonly, when they collect the drift wood there come down numbers of drowned buffalo, that have perished in attempting to cross above, at a season when the ice was bad. These animals the natives are very careful to haul on shore, as they prefer the flesh in that state.

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LIGHT HAired CHILDREN.

An extraordinary sight that struck me among these people, was to see several children, of about ten years of age, whose hair was perfectly gray, and bore a strong resemblance to aged persons. Those I saw were all girls. These people in general have not that strong coarse hair, so peculiar to the natives of North America; it is of a much finer nature, rather inclining to $\frac{1}{2}$ [See Category 14, p. 90. - A.]

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